

Commissioner Deborah A. Gist's Weekly Field Memo
Friday, October 23rd, 2009

From the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE):

[Nonresidency](#) reporting form revised

Guidance on LEA obligations for the education of [English-language learners](#) whose parents waive program placement

Registrations open for “[Dropout Prevention](#) in Rhode Island”

Report highlights Rhode Island work regarding Response to Intervention ([RTI](#))

[Alternate Assessment](#) administrator meetings scheduled

RIDE seeks [high schools](#) to participate in project to improve instructional practices

From other state agencies:

Superintendents invited to attend news conference on the release of the [Urban Education Task Force](#) final report

Minutes of weekly school leadership [H1N1](#) conference call

Attachments to this field memo:

News Release - BEP Regulations and Seniority-Based Teacher Assignments

Nonresidency determination form

Dropout prevention conference 12-8-09

From RIDE:

Nonresidency reporting form revised

RIDE has revised the form that you must send to families to notify them when you have determined that their child is not a resident of your district for school purposes. I have attached the revised form to this field memo.

Guidance on LEA obligations for the education of English-language learners whose parents waive program placement

RIDE will send the new guidance, from our Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Accountability and Office for Diverse Learners, to all district ELL directors. We have posted the guidance on the RIDE Web site:

http://www.ride.ri.gov/applications/ell/who-are-ells/ri_ells.php

Registrations open for “Dropout Prevention in Rhode Island”

The RIDE Office of Middle & High School Reform, along with the New England Secondary School Consortium, is sponsoring a conference on December 8th on dropout prevention. The keynote speaker, Dr. Robert Balfanz, of the Center for Social Organization of Schools at the Johns Hopkins University, will speak on “Putting Middle-Grade Students on the Graduation Path.” I have attached the registration form for this conference.

Report highlights Rhode Island work regarding Response to Intervention (RTI)

The RIDE Office for Diverse Learners has just received a report from the Project Forum that highlights some of the work being done in our state regarding Response to Intervention (RTI). The report shows that RTI, which grew out of regulations for students with disabilities, has now become a valuable education initiative for all students. Here is information on this report:

The following Project Forum document was recently prepared under Federal Cooperative Agreement H326F050001:

- Response to Intervention: Select State Programs

[\(click here to link to document\)](#)

This brief policy analysis gives a concise background to RTI, a definition, and describes the U. S. Department of Education's role in RTI. The data on states (Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island) were gathered based on a document search protocol. The areas described include the state RTI frameworks; RTI administration including rules, guidance, and funding mechanisms; implementation; data and outcomes; and challenges.

Alternate Assessment administrator meetings scheduled

The RIDE Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Accountability and the Office for Diverse Learners have scheduled training workshops for the Alternate Assessment administrators. We will send the following notice to all principals, directors of special education, and administrators of private special-education schools:

We will be holding two RIAA workshops for administrators. The purpose of the meeting is to inform administrators about the RIAA. This training will provide administrators of special education, principals, and other administrators with the necessary information to support and supervise the administration of the RIAA. The training will include the following topics:

- RIAA requirements and timeline
- Participation Criteria
- Criteria for Acceptable Student Work

The dates, times and locations for these workshops are:

November 23, 2009 Southern RI Collaborative 8:30 - 11:30am

December 2, 2009 Northern RI Collaborative 8:30 - 11:30am

To help us prepare for these workshops, please register **no later than November 16** for the workshop at SORICO and **no later than November 23** for the workshop at NRIC. Follow these directions to register:

1. Go to the RIDE website - www.ride.ri.gov.
2. Click on the calendar tab at the bottom of the page.
3. Click on "Open full calendar".
4. Use the arrow pointing to the right to move to November or December.
5. Click on the title of the workshop for November 23rd or December 2nd
6. A new window with details on the workshop will open. Click on register now.

7. When a new window opens, click on Register.
8. Enter your eRIDE User ID and password.
9. Click on Register on the top right.

Registration will no longer be possible once the maximum seating capacity is reached.

For questions or more information about the Alternate Assessment or this meeting, please contact either Cynthia Corbridge, cynthia.corbridge@ride.ri.gov or 222-8497 or Phyllis Lynch, phyllis.lynch@ride.ri.gov or 222-4693.

RIDE seeks high schools to participate in project to improve instructional practices

The RIDE Office of Middle and High-School Reform, in partnership with the New England Secondary School Consortium, has issued the following call for participants in a project to improve instructional practices in high schools:

The Rhode Island Department of Education, in collaboration with the New England Secondary School Consortium (NESSC), has developed a project focused on continuous improvement of instructional practices in Rhode Island high schools. RIDE and NESSC are looking for 4-6 high schools that represent varied RI geographic and demographic profiles to participate in this project. The criteria for the participating schools will also be based upon demonstrated capacity as determined by the 2010 Commissioners' Review and the district's ability to immediately commit to and engage in the first phase of this project. As part of the work, school leaders will be trained in using NESSC developed tools (I-Walkthrough, Global Best Practices in Context, High

Leverage Policy) to review current instructional practices, collect and examine data, and engage in a professional learning community to share findings and best practices with network peers.

Commitment and participation in this project through May 2010 will include:

- One day of initial training of administrators and practitioners in use of tools- scheduled for the morning November 12
- Implementation of I-Walkthrough tool in school sites
- Hosting and participation in monthly, early morning principal seminars
- Hosting monthly walkthroughs with RIDE, school staff, and network peers
- Participating in monthly walkthroughs for network peers
- Commitment to gathering 100 data points per month as a school community and providing appropriate structure/system at school sites to accomplish this data collection
- Holding monthly staff meetings to present data, analyze the findings, and set future targets
- Participation as critical friends' for regional Consortium effort to create a system of performance assessment for NESSC states. This will include the creation of common rubrics to measure student achievement through student exhibitions and portfolios. This project will tie these schools to

NESSC and mutually agreed upon 21st century skills for the New England region

- Sharing of district/school learning and progress at a culminating celebration in May

If you are interested in participating in this project, contact Barbara Miller, at barbaraem@cox.net, or Sharon Lee at sharon.lee@ride.ri.gov. Since the first phase of the project will be limited to 4-6 schools, please indicate your interest as soon as possible.

Schools will be notified of their inclusion in the project by October 29.

From the Office of the Governor:

Superintendents invited to attend news conference on the release of the Urban Education Task Force final report



Governor Donald L. Carcieri

cordially invites you to a Press Conference
to release the Final Report of the
Rhode Island
Urban Education Task Force
*Building Our Future: An Agenda for Quality
Urban Education in Rhode Island*

Tuesday, October 27, 2009
10:00 a.m.
Central Falls High School Library
24 Summer Street, Central Falls, RI

Co-hosted by the
Annenberg Institute for
School Reform at Brown University

Please RSVP to Darlene Westberg
darlene_westberg@brown.edu or



at
401-863-7990

Directions:

From points South: 95 North to Exit Pawtucket). Turn left onto Pine Street. Pine Street becomes Goff Ave. Turn left onto Dexter Street. Turn right onto Summer Street. Central Falls High School will be on the right.

From points North: 95 South to Exit 30 (Roosevelt Ave. towards Central Falls). Stay straight onto Roosevelt Ave. Turn right onto Charles Street, which becomes Sacred Heart Ave. Turn right onto Eastwood St. Turn left onto Fales St. Turn left onto Fletcher St. Turn right onto King St. Turn left onto Perry St. Turn right onto Summer St. Central Falls High School will be on the left.

Street parking only. Please enter the building through the Summer Street entrance.

From the Department of Health:

Minutes of weekly school leadership H1N1 conference call

The Department of Health will post the minutes of its weekly school leadership conference call on H1N1 virus on its Web site:

<http://www.health.ri.gov/flu/for/schools/>